



MARCH 2014 NEWSPAPER

BLACK AND PINK "FREE WORLD" RETREAT NOTES

FUNDRAISING

POSITIVE

We are fiscally sponsored, have done proactive budgeting for the first time, and have fully funded the newspaper through a foundation

CONCRETE

Need to increase grassroots funding, decentralize financial decision-making

DREAM

Charge for free world newspaper subscriptions, more fundraisers, sell more merch for funding

NEWSPAPER

POSITIVE

Online archive, feedback form is being used, almost ready for Spanish translation, monthly for 4 years and counting!

CONCRETE

Info and stories about re-entry, more thematic, more resources, comic strip

DREAM

Monthly message from incarcerated member, direct responses b/w prisoners, longer!

MAIL PROCESSING

POSITIVE

Welcoming for new folks, helps radicalize new folks, more folks doing it at home.

CONCRETE

Regional/neighborhood coordinators, more volunteer days with youth/community orgs

DREAM

Regional mail processed each chapter, 3-5 Black and Pink laptops for mail processing, more home processing parties

VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

POSITIVE

Separating education from family dinner, good expression of appreciation for multiple forms of volunteering

CONCRETE

More paid participation of formerly incarcerated folks, better systems for emotional support

Black and Pink
614 Columbia Rd
Dorchester, MA 02125

Return Service Requested

PRESORTED STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
BOSTON, MA
PERMIT NO. 1475

DREAM

Black and Pink base building framework, well organized support for formerly incarcerated folk

ORGANIZING

POSITIVE

Good job doing solidarity work as individuals, court support, still one of the only orgs working with LGBTQ prisoners

CONCRETE

More support for prison organizing through newspaper, include formerly incarcerated in organizing

DREAM

Build new coalitions, become more militant, cultural campaign on abolition, study groups

EDUCATION

POSITIVE

Separating education from family dinner

CONCRETE

More/diverse facilitators, do education with other orgs, more strategic education as mobilization

DREAM

Prison welcoming committees, more inside support and education, more BP presence inside

ADVOCACY

POSITIVE

Newspaper articles that solicit advocacy from other prisoners

CONCRETE

More training, court support calendar, share success stories, better system to identify urgent advocacy requests

DREAM

Assessment of individual prisons with case histories, more advocacy by former incarcerated/court involved

Continued on Page 2...

¡EL PERIÓDICO DE BLACK AND PINK AHORA DISPONIBLE EN ESPAÑOL! / BLACK AND PINK NEWSPAPER NOW AVAILABLE IN SPANISH!

La policía, los tribunales, y el sistema de prisiones en los Estados Unidos acosan a gente de color, particularmente a gente negra, latín@, árabe, o indígena. Casi 1 al 3 de los prisioneros hablan español como lengua materna. Queremos que nuestro periódico sea lo más disponible posible para cualquiera persona quien quiera leerlo. Somos una familia más fuerte cuando más gente nos pueden entender.

Por favor, avisen a todos sus amigos lesbiana, gay, bisexual, transgenero, o kuir/queer quisieran recibir un periódico en español. Pueden escribir a: Black and Pink - Spanish Newspaper 614 Columbia Rd.

The US police, court, and prison system targets people of color, particularly Black, Latin@, Arab, and Indigenous/American Indian people. Nearly 1 in 3 prisoners' first language is Spanish. We want our newspaper to be as available as possible to everyone who wants to read it. We are a stronger family when more people can understand us.

Please tell all your Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and/or Queer friends who would like a newspaper in Spanish to write to:

**Black and Pink - Spanish Newspaper
614 Columbia Rd.
Dorchester, MA 02125**

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Statement of Purpose

Black & Pink is an open family of LGBTQ prisoners and "free world" allies who support each other. Our work toward the abolition of the prison industrial complex is rooted in the experience of currently and formerly incarcerated people. We are outraged by the specific violence of the prison industrial complex against LGBTQ people, and respond through advocacy, education, direct service, and organizing.

Black & Pink is proudly a family of people of all races.

About this Newspaper

Since 2007, Black & Pink free world volunteers have pulled together a monthly newspaper primarily composed of material written by our family's incarcerated members. In response to letters we receive, more prisoners receive the newspaper each issue!

This month, the newspaper is being sent to:
4,789 prisoners!

Disclaimer:

Please note that the ideas and opinions expressed in the Black & Pink Newspaper are solely those of the authors and artists and do not necessarily reflect the views of Black & Pink. Black & Pink makes no representations as to the accuracy of any statements made in the Newspaper, including but not limited to legal and medical information. Authors and artists bear sole responsibility for their work. Everything published in the Newspaper is also on the internet—it can be seen by anyone with a computer. By sending a letter to "Newspaper Submissions," you are agreeing to have your piece in the Newspaper and on the internet. For this reason, we only publish First Names and State Location to respect people's privacy. Pieces may be edited to fit our anti-oppression values and based on our Editing Guidelines.

Call for Submissions to HOT PINK!

Seeking erotic short stories and poems by Black & Pink incarcerated and free-world family members for a new 'zine. Please send submissions to our Black & Pink - HOT PINK. This is a voluntary project, and no money will be offered for submissions, but you might get the chance to share your spicy story with many others! To subscribe to receive erotica, write to our address, Black & Pink - GENERAL.

A MESSAGE FROM JASON

Dear friends,

I hope this note finds you as well as possible. As always, when writing this note I think about all the ridiculous things going on across our country and think about what to highlight in this letter. I am thinking particularly about Jordan Davis, and how there is yet another national story about a Black young man getting killed in Florida and the white man (Michael Dunn) who killed him was found not guilty of his murder. As an abolitionist I know that the judicial system is not where we find authentic justice, and that incarceration is not part of how we will create the world we dream of. Yet I still find myself filled with fury that the lives of Black people are so devalued in the dominant culture. The trick is to then transform that fury into community based organizing and victories for our struggle. I think back to our community, to our reach as Black and Pink, and I feel inspired that we are trying to create something different.

As I write this note there are members of Congress preparing for a hearing on the uses of solitary confinement in US prisons and jails. I am disappointed to tell you that this hearing, that was organized by Senator Dick Durban from Illinois, is including so few voices. The people who will get to deliver public testimony, for everyone to see and hear, are as follows: Charles Samuels Jr, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons; Craig DeRoche, former Michigan Republican State Rep and current head of the very conservative Justice Fellowship; Rick Raemisch, Executive Director of Colorado Dept. of Corrections; Marc Levin, Director of the Center for Effective Justice; and only two formerly incarcerated people Piper Kerman, author of Orange is the New Black; and Rick Raemisch, freed by the Innocence Project. While I am sure that some of these folks will have some interesting and important things to say about the uses of solitary confinement, I am very disappointed that the hearing speakers have been so cherry picked. It is unfortunate that half of the speakers are employed by institutions that lock people up in solitary confinement and only two speakers have actually experienced any time in solitary. It is also disappointing that the formerly incarcerated people they include in the hearing fit into a nice little mold, someone who has been declared innocent of the offense he was incarcerated for and a gender conforming white woman from a wealthy background who did a short federal sentence. It is not to say that their stories are not important to be heard, but rather that their stories are the minority story and we need to be telling the truth about incarceration and the use of solitary confinement.

In response to the hearing, Black and Pink will be submitting written testimony. We have hundreds of subscribers to this newspaper who are currently sitting in solitary confinement cells, you may be one of them as you read this note. It is important that we share the experiences of our family with Senator Durbin and other members of Congress. We know that LGBTQ people are put in solitary confinement more often and experience more violence by prison staff. There have been studies released that highlight the harm solitary confinement does to a person's brain after only a short time locked down. I know that for myself, after only 45 total days in the hole, there are lifetime effects and yet many people are locked in solitary for years and even decades. I will take the stories that many of you have shared with us to send our Black and Pink testimony to Senator Durbin. While we know that the abolition of the prison industrial complex is our goal, we will put an end to solitary confinement on our road there. We keep on fighting knowing that once there were no prisons, that day will come again.

In loving solidarity,
Jason

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are currently processing mail from November, but are quickly catching up. Please know that we are going through mail we receive as quickly as we can. Unfortunately we are not able to do individual responses to each letter, but know that we hold you all in our hearts.

Please remember that when you want to add additional names to our newspaper list that we need that person to write their information as well. It is completely okay to have multiple requests in one envelope, we just need to see different handwriting so as not to add anyone to our list who does not want to receive the newspaper.

BLACK AND PINK "FREE WORLD" RETREAT NOTES CONTINUED

CHAPTERS

POSITIVE

Free world chapters, interest in prison based chapters

CONCRETE

Expand startup kit, assess barriers to prison chapter building, more inter-chapter communication

DREAM

Annual Black and Pink retreat for all chapters, buddy system for prison and free-world chapters

MEDIA

POSITIVE

Allied Media Conference, Facebook posts, e-newsletter, outreach materials

CONCRETE

Post more resources via media, new website, more print media, more collab. with other orgs

DREAM

Documentary about abolitionist groups, infographics, more exposure for prisoner voices

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE, LEADERSHIP CIRCLE (LC)

POSITIVE

Feedback form decentralizes decision-making

CONCRETE

Expand decision-making power for incarcerated folks, clarify LC membership, clearer division of labor

DREAM

"Job descriptions" for LC and volunteer positions, create a LC selection process for free-world and prison

PENPAL OUTREACH

POSITIVE

Chapters doing it well, one-time card writing happening often, good penpal relationships

CONCRETE

Penpal of the week on social media, emphasize history, building genuine relationships, penpal mentors

DREAM

Getting a penpal for everyone in prison who wants one!

ABOLITIONIST ANALYSIS

POSITIVE

Explicit politics, intersectional analysis of oppressions, linguistic accessibility, feedback form

CONCRETE

Reading group, meet people where they're at, more discussion and expression of what abolition means

DREAM

Articulate and practice alternative justice models, and an everyday practice of abolition

Dear Black & Pink Family,

I am writing in wishes that all of my LGBTQ family had a happy holiday season, and especially my pagan brothers and sisters, a happy Yule and Imbolc.

Second, due to a very sudden and very unanticipated turn of events, I will be released from prison. I will continue to be active with Black & Pink and have, with the invaluable insight and input of my two sisters Angel and Diamond, made plans to begin an LGBTQ collective/organization upon my release. It will be a lot of work, of course, but it is work that is necessary-besides, doing what you love for those you love is not really work.

Will be in touch.

All my love to all,

O, Released from a Nevada prison in January '14

Forever Yours

Regardless of what may happen, good or bad, whether you suffer misfortunes or things that make you sad, I'll stand by you. My heart will never leave you alone, I won't abandon you when it gets hard or leave you on your own. Come whatever may, my love, know that I'm here for you. No matter what the price or sacrifice it's something that I'll do, I'll be that light, that warmth, and the sunshine in your every day. There will never come a time when you think that I don't care, because I'll be the air you breath. I'll always be there, I'll be that source of strength beyond all distance and time, because of the place you gave me inside of your heart and mind.

The seasons may change from spring to summer to fall to winter, but through everything, baby, I'll be there with you through it all. Opportunities may come and go just like opening and closing of doors, but the one thing that will remain constant is that I am forever yours.

Daniel, Illinois

Hi Family,

I am in C.M. now, and an officer smacked me in the face so I fought back, yet I'm the one who gets punished for defending myself. I ended up getting jumped on by 2 other officers as was the case, their justification is that I'm a threat to security and other inmates. The kicker of it all is all I did was ask a captain some questions about rules and procedures in the dorm. I just want the family to know I'm OK, they can't break me because I'm unbreakable, nothing they say or do will suppress my voice, my pen. Nelson Mandela said it best of all- "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." I am changing mine, one pen stroke at a time. What are you doing to change the world around you?

I got my GED and next I plan to become a Law Clerk and fight this machine, the prison-industrial complex, from the inside out, 'till they set me free so I can work to free my fellow LGBTQ family members. I encourage all to stand strong and hold each other up and be proud of who we are. I'm Gay and Damn Proud of it too. Well, ya'll this is goodbye for now, but not for long.

Signing out,
Marrin, Duck Tape
Florida

Black & Pink,

What's up B&P Fam, it's me Whyte Coco from Indiana. I got a real question-- if you have HIV, do you think it's OK to have sex with someone who's not HIV positive and not tell them that you are HIV positive, because someone did that you? Someone here does it, and I say it's wrong, and no one should take it out on other people just to get their rocks off. I'm just glad I'm careful who I have sex with and how cus I don't want to catch anything.

I would like to give a shout out to Lakesha from Indiana, and give thanks to my Black & Pink family for helping me and posting my writing in the paper. I love all my brothaz and sistaz and let's stay strong, keep your head up high, it's our time to rise, LBGTQ Movement.

Much Love,
XXXOOOXO
Whyte Coco, Indiana

Dear Black & Pink,

This is Gary aka Nicole wishing all my Brothers and Sisters a happy new year- 2014 is here, let's stand even stronger than before. I hope many of us get out this year. I for one hope to get out this year. The love from the Black & Pink family has kept me going. Now I send my love to all who are lonely and lost. Never give up. Always believe in yourself. You are beautiful. No matter how hard it gets. Always keep your head up. Don't let anybody change who you are. I stand strong with all who need my strength. And believe you me I am strong as hell. Every day when you wake up, smile for me and for yourself. Let no one break you. Be who you are.

Much Love,
Nicole, Rhode Island

Dear B&P,

To start this notation I deeply thank you for welcoming me with understanding, kindness, love, and honor into the B&P family. I truly enjoy reading the uplift of the B&P family and my heart goes out to all those that are so brave in expressing some of the pain that has mentally/spiritually attempted to derail them. From seeking and finding happiness, it's organizations such as B&P that restore in us the hopes of gaining that light of peace, joy, love, and true inner happiness. So I send to all of the brothaz and sistaz whose stories I read the love within my heart & soul and to all the B&P whole family as well. I look forward to reading & sharing more words of inspiration to help others push through the shadows of darkness.

In closing, Blessings,

Mr. Tonga

Dear My Loving Black & Pink Fam,

I hope all my LGBT people are in the best conditions mentally, physically, and spiritually. My name is Felicity, I'm 23 years old and I'm doing 15 years in Florida. I have been down 6 years and counting now. I have been on Seg now going on 3 years for poss. of a knife that was found in my matt. But later after appealing my ticket, I won my appeal and was hoping they would let me out of Seg back into open Pop, but I was wrong. Here I am 3 years later still under lock and key for a ticket I beat! I think it's totally bogus, 'cause let's say you catch a charge and come to prison, then you go appeal and win, they let you go home free. I think the same rules should apply when it comes to catching tickets in here, but nooooo... They go by their own rules and say even though I may have beat the ticket, it doesn't mean it ain't happen, and I'm stuck!

Since my 3 years stint on the slab I have been striped of all my property, clothing, matt, then gassed and left to sleep on a steel bunk in 30 degree weather. Tell me that's not oppression... it is! I've been harassed time and time again for my identity, being a flamboyant, fem gay. Plus my race makes me a target here. But still I stand, I won't bend and I won't break, I am proud of who I am, I carry myself with gay pride 24/7. And to all my LGBT people I suggest you do the same, don't be ashamed of who you are, hold your heads high and don't allow our oppressors to change who you/we are.

There was a time that prisons didn't exist and one day it will happen again, so stand up and fight, fight, fight by any means necessary. With that being said you/we are what your deep driving desire is. As is your desire, so is your will. As is your will, so is your deed. As your deed, so is your destiny.

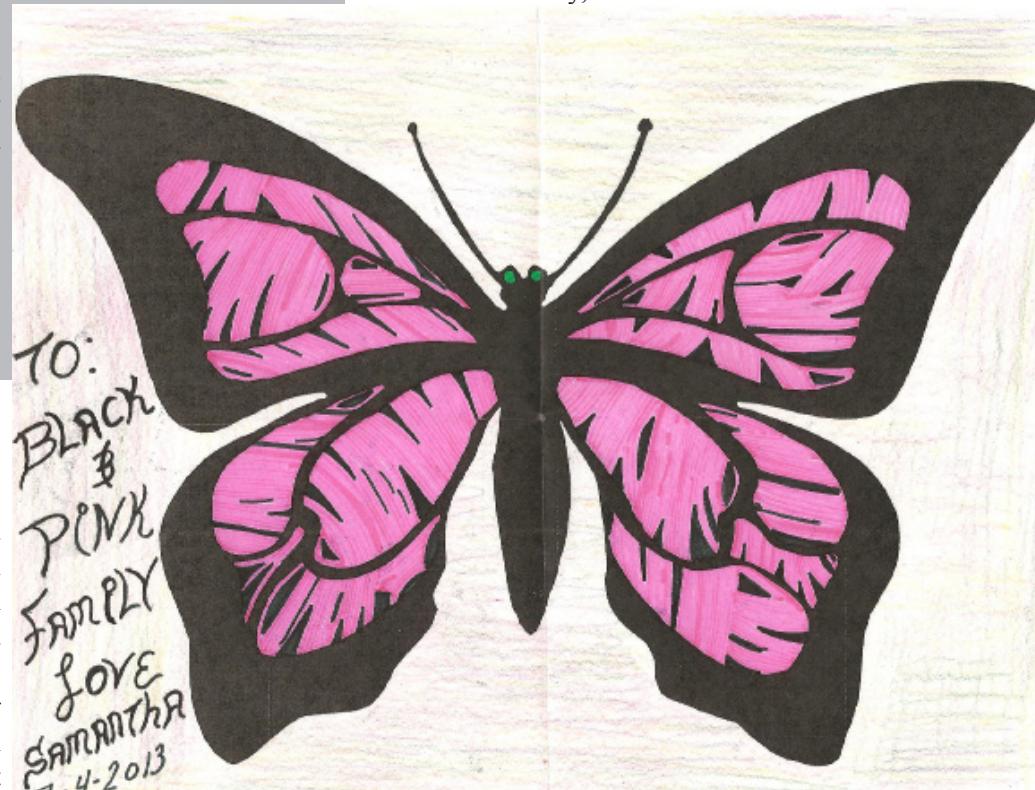
Peace & Blessing,
Felicity, Florida

Part II of Bayh's Letter
Continued From February 2014

In the early days of the Black Panther Party, the Black Panthers sought to find ways to make Nietzsche's theory work in the best interest of Black people. Words could be used not only to make Black people more proud, but also to make whites question and even reject concepts by which they had always unthinkingly accepted! I notice

that one of the prime needs of the Black Panthers, in terms of this, was to create a new definition for "policeman." A good descriptive word—one the community would accept and use—would not only advance Black consciousness, but also in effect, control the police by making them see themselves in a new light. The Black Panthers thought up new terms, such as the reverse of god (dog), but it did not catch on. They tried beast, brute, and animal, but none of the aforementioned terms captured the essential qualities the Black Panthers were trying to convey. However, one day, while working on the Black Panther newspaper, Eldridge Cleaver showed the Black Panthers a Post Card from Beverly Axelhood, where a slogan stated "Support your Local Police": there was a sheriff's star, and in the center of the star there was a sheriff's star above the phrase, and in the center of the star was a grinning, slobbering pig. It was just what the Black Panthers were looking for, and they began to show police as "pigs" in their cartoons—and from time to time, used the word. "Pig" caught on and entered the language. This was a form of psychological warfare and raised the consciousness of people, as well as inflicted a new consciousness upon the ruling circle.

In love and solidarity,
for I am loved by few and hated by many,
Bayh!, Maryland



TRANS FOLKS DOWN FOR THE FIGHT

DEE FARMER WON A LANDMARK SUPREME COURT CASE ON INMATE RIGHTS. BUT THAT'S NOT THE HALF OF IT. (PART I: STORY WILL CONTINUE IN FUTURE ISSUES) BY ALISON FLOWERS

Dee Farmer gets a fan letter every now and then.

She's legally blind, so someone reads her mail to her. The notes come from all over, from people thanking her for what she did to protect them.

Farmer says she doesn't keep the letters. "I would like for my legacy to be that I changed injustices for a multitude of people who were or would have suffered unjustly," she tells the Voice in an email.

January 12 marked 20 years since the U.S. Supreme Court heard the landmark case that bears her name: *Farmer v. Brennan*. The story made national headlines in 1994. "Prison's Intolerable Horror," blared the *Miami Herald*. "Federal Inmate Contends Prison Rape Violated Constitutional Rights," the Associated Press announced. "Rape of Transsexual Inmate Raises Issue of Prison Liability," declared the *Washington Post*.

Long before *Orange is the New Black* portrayed a transgender convict as the new norm, there was Dee Farmer. From a prison cell, she instigated a high-level legal argument that would recalibrate our reading of the Bill of Rights.

Because the Eighth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution forbids cruel and unusual punishment, Farmer contended, prison officials had a legal duty to protect inmates from harm.

Six months later, in June 1994, all nine justices of the Supreme Court concurred.

Born Douglas Coleman Farmer in Baltimore, Maryland, Dee Farmer grew up in a loving, religious home.

She says she always identified as female.

"I was pretty much a loner and didn't play with other children or have many friends," Farmer, now 48, says. "I felt I was 'different' and that I didn't fit in due to my effeminate nature."

Other kids mocked her. So did grown-ups. "I don't want that little faggot in my car," her uncle hollered as a group of kids caught rides to the beach.

Farmer began hormone therapy in her teens and wore women's clothes. Around age 16, she fell in love with an older woman and dropped her female identity, but when the relationship ended a year later, she resumed life as a woman, eventually changing her name to Dee Deirdre Farmer.

Though she had considered a career as an airline stewardess (her words), Farmer had never worked a job where she'd earned an honest dollar when a judge sentenced her to two decades in federal prison in 1986 for credit card fraud.

Housed with male inmates, Farmer stood out. There were the silicone breast implants. The makeup. Her predilection for wearing her uniform shirt off one shoulder. Smuggled-in estrogen pills smoothed her skin. She'd undergone an unsuccessful black-market operation to remove her testicles — a botched job she attempted to complete while behind bars, with a razor blade. She was also HIV-positive.

By 1989, prison officials in Oxford, Wisconsin, had had enough of Farmer. Her case manager noted in a deposition that she'd been involved in a "sexual act" in the recreation yard. And she had participated in a scheme in which she'd used the prison phone and someone else's credit card to have flowers and fruit baskets sent to the facility. (A holiday prank, one of her former attorneys recalls.) So the Federal Bureau of Prisons transferred Farmer to a maximum-security prison in Indiana, placing her — a young, nonviolent woman — within a violent male population.

She had been in her new cell in Terre Haute for a little more than a week on April 1, 1989. It was on that day, Farmer would allege, that a fellow inmate approached her and demanded sex. When she refused, he punched and kicked her, revealing a homemade knife stowed in his sneaker. The attacker tore off her clothes, held her down on the bed, and raped her, and threatened to murder her if she told. Farmer told.

Prison officials moved her out of the facility's general population to await a hearing about her HIV-positive status. She was later moved to a medium-security prison where there would be "no continuing threat of physical injury," according to the deputy solicitor general's subsequent oral arguments before the high court.

"The rape kept repeating itself over and over again in my mind, and I knew that I had to try and do something," Farmer remembers.

ADVOCACY: HELP A SISTER OUT!

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Hello Everyone,

If you would like to write another letter to support Jenni, an incarcerated B&P member and California Prison Chapter Leader, below is a sample letter. You can write to one or all of the people at the addresses below, and mention any or all of the action requests listed. Please Note: This is not the correct address for Jenni, please do not write to her directly at the below address, it will not reach her, and will not help her cause. Though we all may feel anger and rage about these issues, calm & respectful letters will be most helpful at this time. Thank you everyone who can help out.

-Jenni, B&P California Prison Chapter Leader & Ian, Black & Pink Free World Leadership Circle

To: Associate Director
CDCR Division of Adult Institutions, High Security
1515 "S" Street, Room 344N
Sacramento, CA 95814

Martin D. Biter, Warden
Kern Valley State Prison
3000 W. Cecil Ave
P.O. Box 3130
Delano, CA 93216-6000

P. Vera, Associate Warden, Complex II
Kern Valley State Prison
3000 W. Cecil Ave
P.O. Box 3130
Delano, CA 93216-6000

Re: Treatment of J. Gann E23852
Date: (Date you are writing)
Dear (Warden, Associate Warden, or Associate Director),

I write to you today to express concern for one of the people incarcerated at Kern Valley State Prison. **John David Gann is an inmate at KVSP (# E23852). As a transgender woman who goes by Jennifer Gann, she has repeatedly experienced harassment based on her gender identity, and now retaliation because of her efforts to address this harassment.**

We first brought this to the attention of the administration in March of 2013, and we were assured appropriate action would be taken. However, I now concerned that this situation has not been handled appropriately and more harm has been done to J. Gann. Gann was interviewed by Sgt. M. Jones and Lt. C. Waddle, during which she was belittled, denigrated, and given an incorrect disciplinary report for "illegal sexual acts" involving her cellmate. She was moved to another housing unit and nearly forced into a double cell with a violently homophobic inmate, and then nearly placed in Ad Seg for advocating for her safety concerns. This resulted in a second incorrect/unfair disciplinary report for "refusing a cellmate." (In addition, much of Gann's personal property was lost when it was incorrectly left with her former cellmate).

The following actions will help fix this situation:

- Address Gann's original CDCR-22 request concerning transgender strip searches and sexual harassment; refrain from group strip searches and cross-gender strip searches which unnecessarily expose transgender inmates to ridicule and embarrassment; have female officers strip search transwomen inmates; conduct all searches in a professional manner that respects Gann's status as a person, and her particular status as a transgender woman in a men's prison.

- Expunge and dismiss retaliatory false disciplinary reports of 6/26/13, 6/28/13, and 9/11/13, which happened after initial attempts to address issues listed above.

- Return or replace property lost by KVSP staff during the rehousing of Gann on 6/26/13 and 6/28/13, or provide monetary compensation. Investigate misconduct and mistreatment of Gann by Sgt. M. Jones and Lt. C. Waddle on 6/26/13 and 6/28/13, and related falsification of records and documents (CDCR-115 & CDCR-144D)

- Investigate misconduct and retaliation against Gann by Sgt. D. Williams and C/O Walinga on 9/5/13 during a misconduct investigation, in which they ransacked Gann's cell and confiscated items from her cellmate. Evaluate Gann for rehousing at a women's facility, as mandated by the Prison Rape Elimination Act national standards.

I write to you out of personal concern for Jenni. I also write as a member of Black & Pink. Black & Pink is a nationwide organization of over 4,250 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) prisoners and Free World allies. We recognize that unfortunately, LGBTQ people are often targeted for unfair treatment in prison. We work to stop all discriminatory treatment, including that which Jenni is experiencing in your institution.

Thank you for your time and attention to this. I look forward to hearing that this issue has been resolved appropriately.
Respectfully,
(your name here)

LETTERS TO OUR FAMILY CONTINUED

Dear Black & Pink,

I would like to start off by introducing myself. My name is Matty and I'm a 25 year old proud Gay man. I've been attracted to men my whole life, as far back as I can remember but I didn't start openly acting on my sexuality until I was 16. Since that time I've experienced both sides of the coin when it comes to reacting to my sexuality. I've been loved and hated, accepted and condemned, pursued and assaulted mentally and physically. In my short span of years, I've learned to deal with a lot, I've learned that I don't have to let the "hate" and "disgust" rule my life. I don't have to be offended by words like "faggot" or "queer" said with hate. Loving one's self is first done by accepting and embracing who and what we are.

I'm currently serving an 8 year sentence for burglary and in the 4 1/2 years I've already served I've dealt with negativity and hate from every side, as I'm sure all my brothers and sisters out there have. But in accepting and loving myself, it's allowed me to stand up and defend my right to be who I am more vehemently and the confidence in the fact that I'm doing what is right. So I want all of my beautiful brothers and sisters in the LGBT community to remember that you are perfect and that nothing anyone says can change that. Stand strong everyone and we'll make it through this together.

Sincerely,
Matty, Idaho

Dear Black & Pink Family,

Well, I would like to wish you all a very happy New Year and many more to come. I've been down 7 years now and this past Saturday was the first time I talked to my big brother in all the time I been in prison. I cried so hard, but God made a way and for that I am happy. The last words he told me was, "I love you lil' brother and you have a family out here that love you and stay out bull and get home." I also got his number and my little brother's phone number- God is good! I'm going to call all the time now.

But the problem is, Black & Pink family, that I have been on Ex-lockdown since September 17, 2012, and only had 2 write-ups since being on it. I go up for the "Review Board," but they keep turning me down and checking the box "Serious nature of past offenses." I have not been into any trouble and how can my past stop me from making the Review Board. If you looking at my past and that only, then how can you see my improvement in my conduct and what I have done to better myself? God knows I'm trying to do right, but it's like they don't want you to overcome your past and better yourself. Anyone know what I should do?

As I close, I want you all to know that I love you, and that "If God is for us, then who can be against us." Remember these three words: Love, Faith, and Hope. I'll be in touch.

With Love & In the Struggle,
Brielle, Louisiana

Dear Sisters and Family of the Struggle,

I love Black & Pink because it is a tool to learn and grow, as well as an outlet to vent. So I've decided to write an article addressing sexual violence and assaults that happen to transwomen inside California's state prison system, which houses more than 350 MTF transgender people. All transwomen in prison have experienced sexual assaults in some form. I want to give the readers, my family, insight into the psychological warfare transwomen battle with that leads us too often to the front door of abuse.

Being a transwoman in prison is an overwhelming, traumatizing experience that more often than not deteriorates us mentally and physically. We are placed in an existence of submission by our male conquerors and their self gratification. There is no room for remorse or compassion, those basic emotions are drowned in the overwhelming urge of sexual gratification. We are women in male prisons, and we are seen as and become prey. This will always be as long as we are housed with men.

Let me enlighten you to an even greater threat to transwomen in prison than a man's sexual lust: loneliness. We need to understand that in prison loneliness is the one emotion that has the ability to cripple your mind, body, and soul. This emotion is the downfall of transwomen at one time or another in a prison setting because it's not an emotion of greed and deceit, but of survival and human nature. It is an instinctive emotion that can cause us to misjudge, accept, overlook, and negotiate our bodies. This is a primary reaction when you are prey.

When we allow ourselves to be the weaker ones, we bow emotionally, mentally, as well as physically to our conquerors whose only objective is to use us as a mental and sexual crutch. Transwomen have become victims of circumstances, but it's also true we can be complacent and acceptable in our roles as victims. The only way to change our acceptances of self as prey is to understand that we control our destiny. We are powerful, we are a community built on adversity! We are strong. Love yourself and your sisters. No more infighting, let's come together for a better tomorrow. Stay focused on what truly matters, and don't ever forget to love and respect yourself.

Respectfully,
Nina, California

STRUGGLING FOR RIGHTS!

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THE EIGHTH AMENDMENT AND DELIBERATE INDIFFERENCE STANDARD

Eighth Amendment to the United States Constitution: "Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted."

The Eighth Amendment guarantees prisoners throughout the US freedom from cruel and unusual punishment. Within the prison system, this means that prison officials must provide certain amenities to prisoners that address basic human needs. These "amenities" include adequate nourishment and living conditions, limited recreation, access to the courts' due process in disciplinary hearings; reasonable medical care; and equal treatment. If prison officials deliberately deprive prisoners of these basic necessities, they are in direct violation of prisoners' constitutional rights under the Eighth Amendment.

The United States Supreme Court has recognized the rights of prisoners to sue prison officials when conditions of confinement fail to meet minimum constitutional standards. The most common reasons for bringing suit include inadequate medical care; excessive force by corrections officials; violence by other prisoners; dangerous or detrimental physical conditions of the prison; due process violations; and lack of access to the courts.

Deliberate Indifference Standard: Prisoners must show that the conditions they cite in an Eighth Amendment claim are the result of prison officials "deliberate indifference." I.e. if you are suing prison officials because of your conditions of confinement, it is not enough to show that the conditions alone were so substandard as to be "cruel and unusual." You will need to prove that prison officials were aware of the conditions and refused to put corrective measures in place. This is why it is very important to exercise the Grievance process before litigating in court.

This standard for Eighth Amendment cases was set by the United States Supreme Court in the case of *Wilson v. Seiter*, 501 U.S. 294 (1991), where a prisoner brought a complaint against the director of the Ohio DOC and the warden of the prison he was held at. His complaint challenged a number of conditions of confinement, including overcrowding, excessive noise, insufficient locker storage space, inadequate restrooms, heating and cooling, improper ventilation, unsanitary dining facilities and food preparation, and housing with mentally and physically ill prisoners.

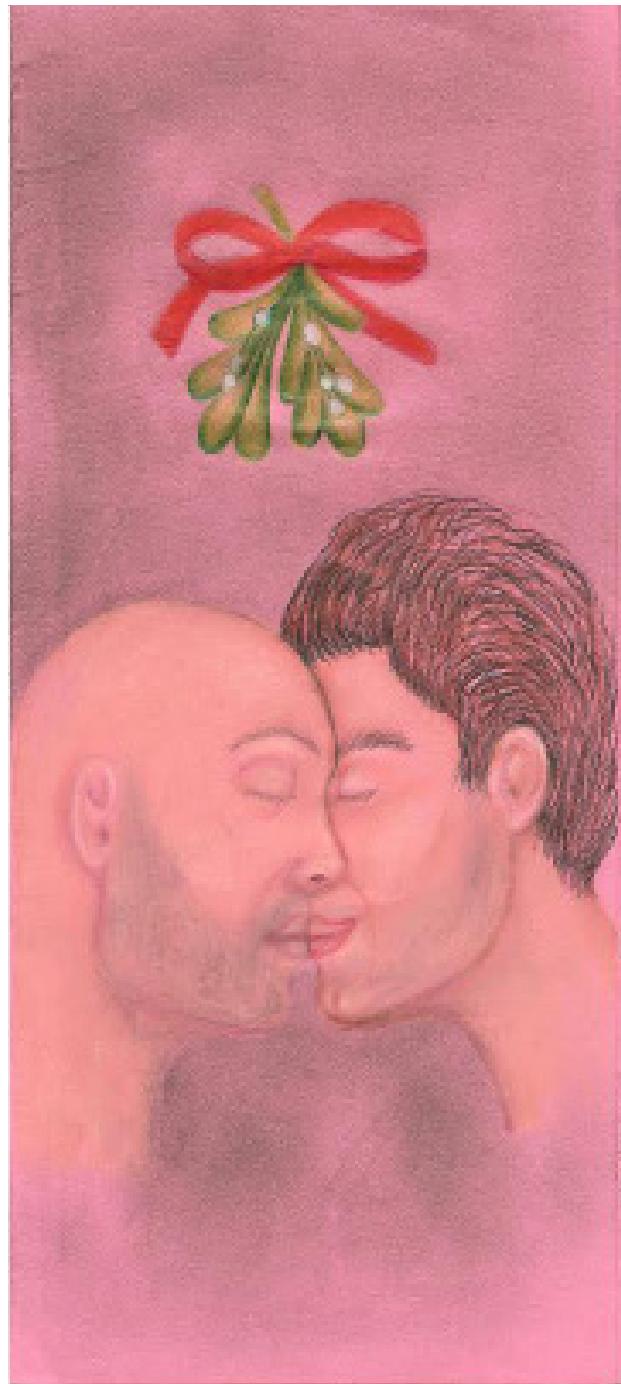
In defending themselves, the warden and director denied some of Wilson's allegations and stated that prison officials had made efforts to correct others. The court that just heard the case granted summary judgment (a court proceeding that settles the case based upon documents filed) in favor of the prison officials. The court of appeals upheld the district court's decision, and Wilson petitioned the United States Supreme Court for review of his claims. He never gave up his fight!

In considering the case, *supra*, the Supreme Court focused not upon the specificity of the allegations, but upon the question as to whether or not a prisoner claiming that conditions of confinement constitute "cruel and unusual punishment" must show a culpable state of mind on the part of prison officials. The Justices of the Court turned to the celebrated/landmark case of *Estelle v. Gamble*, 429 U.S. 97 (1976) to make their determination. In its decision, the Supreme Court stated "...we see no significant distinction between claims alleging inadequate medical care and those alleging inadequate "conditions of confinement." Indeed, the medical care a prisoner receives is just as much a "condition" of his confinement as the food he is fed, the clothes he is issued, the temperature he is subjected to in his cell, and the protection he is afforded against other prisoners. There is no indication that, as a general matter, the actions of the prison officials with respect to these non-medical conditions are taken materially different constraints than their actions with respect to medical conditions... it is appropriate to apply the "deliberate indifference" standard articulated in *Estelle*."

The Supreme Court determined that the court of appeals was wrong in not applying the "deliberate indifference" standard. As a result, the Supreme Court vacated the judgment against Wilson and sent the case back to the lower district court for reconsideration of the case under the "deliberate indifference" standard. Since the standard for conditions of confinement cases is deliberate indifference, and the Supreme Courts' view of deliberate indifference was modified in *Farmer v. Brennan*, 511 U.S. 825 (1994) courts have been applying the Farmer standard to Eighth Amendment conditions of confinement cases since 1994.

Prisoners filing an Eighth Amendment claim must show an objective and subjective component in the complaint. The "objective" component involves the serious deprivation or denial of basic human needs; i.e. a condition of your confinement that is so poor, substandard, or dangerous as to be considered inhumane or pose a substantial risk of serious harm. Deliberate indifference, which involves a prison official's state of mind or knowledge concerning the conditions of confinement, is the "subjective" component of an Eighth amendment claim.

Continued on Page 7..



Art by John, Connecticut

COLOR OF OUR RAINBOW

Wondering souls of the rainbow, self navigating through the fog of gender bias. Hollow hearts filled with jaded love but unwilling to darken. Motivated by the truth of our man- and womanhood, unbowed by society's shattered reflection of who we are. We walk under the rainbow colors of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. They comfort us in our journey for equality. Who are we we're your sisters, brothers, mothers, fathers, we are your friends and co-workers, and we are LBGTQ. Feel our colors and then you will know our hearts. See our colors and respect our journey. Being LGBTQ isn't a flaw, we are the glitter of the world. So even when bigotry and hatred rains down on us, there will always be the colors of our rainbow shining through with righteousness.

Nina, California

DISGUISES

How come out of every 10 people, 8 of them be in disguise? Subconscious warning us daily, but when it's all revealed we act surprised? How do the 8 always find the short-cuts to our hearts? Could it be their illusions that be forming the perfect mirage? And why do we reminisce about the times that we know now were wrong? Is it b'cuz we still think, "What if?" Or are feelings just that strong? And if you could change the things, would you change the 8 ways? Or would you solidify your relationship with the 2, and never have those "What if?" days? So how come out of 10 people you only deal with 2? Is it b'cuz life is too short for playing games and playing games isn't for you?

Felicity, Florida

DON'T LET THEM

Page 6

I'm trying with all my might to keep hope alive
If for nothing else just to say I tried.
I'm doing all that I can do
To keep an open heart for you.

Every night I'm wishing on stars
That this distance between us doesn't break up this love of ours.
I've never felt so alone since we've been apart.

I'm doing my best to believe that you still love me
And that your heart remains mine
Like it did once upon a time.

I know temptations can sometimes become too much to bear
And you're human so I understand if you act on them
Because I'm not there.

I'm so confused I don't know what to do.
I'm afraid of this silence between us because it screams the truth.
It's been so long since your last letter
But I read it every day
And pray that no matter what you do
You don't let them take your love away.

Tigger, California
"Dedicated to anyone who has a distance

FEBRUARY FEEDBACK SUMMARY

How will you let others know that our newspaper is available in Spanish?

"I will spread the word about the Spanish edition." "I am going to let our Spanish speaking family know they now have access to your newsletter, I am going to pass it around to all on my yard." "I posted a notice on the bulletin boards in the housing unit, the Rec center (a popular hangout), and the gym." "In the Virginia dept of Corrections, prisoners aren't allowed to receive publications in languages other than English, with extremely limited exceptions for religious material"

How do you think we can best reach other Spanish speakers?

"Include a Spanish language flier in the next issue that we can give to them." "Advertise in Spanish-language resource guides." "To best reach Spanish speakers is to have Spanish prisoners write content that Spanish people can identify with; don't just translate the English to Spanish, Spanish only content should be provided as well"

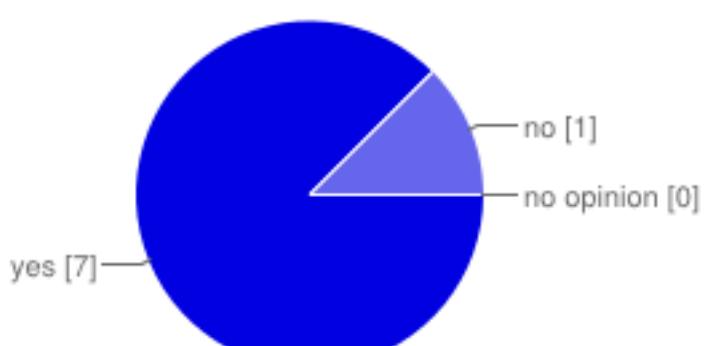
What do you think other prisoners can do?

"Word of mouth- if you send fliers to folks and have them post it in their unit, Spanish-speaking inmates will see it"

Do you think Black and Pink should expand our family to include prisoners living with HIV/AIDS regardless of their sexual and/or gender identity?

yes	7	88%
no	1	13%
no opinion	0	0%

"YES YES YES. education is key to stopping this from overtaking us." "I hate to say no, but it could diminish the newspaper's quality if the message becomes too vague or broad. I don't think it's the right move at this time." "This is a hard question, but my first thought is YES. The more people we include in the cause the better. However... the newspaper is always full, where would the space for HIV/AIDS articles



STRUGGLING FOR RIGHTS! CONTINUED

... *Continued from Page 5* Are the prisons officials where you are familiar that the conditions you complain of pose serious threats and have they acted to take corrective measures to change such conditions? You will need to be able to show both objective and subjective components in making a claim concerning conditions of confinement. Objectively, the condition(s) being complained about must be sufficiently serious that the conditions could cause extreme pain, suffering, injury, or death. Subjectively, it must be demonstrated that the prison officials responsible for the condition had a "sufficiently culpable state of mind." I.e. that the prison officials knew of the conditions and were aware that such conditions presented a substantial risk of harm. See *Isby v. Clark*, *Pope v. Shafer*, *Koehl v. Dalsheim*, and *Hemmings v. Gorczyk*. Keep in mind that these cases pre-date the Farmer case, but such cases still demonstrated how the Supreme Court approaches conditions of confinement claims.

There's a kickass case that prison officials do not want others to have! It's called *Madrid v. Gomez* 1995. In that case, a class action suit was filed and they won! The Madrid case influences courts around the country to adopt its persuasive authority. The Madrid court held that the Eighth Amendment "does not permit the pattern of needless and officially sanctioned brutality that has invaded operations at the prison." Not only did the prisoners in the Madrid case prove they suffered a pattern of excessive force that caused sufficient harm and demonstrated the infliction of pain on a classwide basis, but the prisoners also showed that the pattern was attributable not to inadvertence or mistake, but due to deliberate indifference and a knowing willingness that harm would occur. Talk back to me! The Madrid court reminded prison officials that "prisoners are sent to prison AS punishment, not FOR punishment."

May I remain,
In love, solidarity, and Revolution!
Khalid, aka Bayh!, Maryland

UPDATE ON MICHELLE KOSILEK

A federal appeals court in Boston has agreed to rehear the state's appeal of a lower court ruling that Michelle Kosilek must receive gender affirming surgery. In a ruling Wednesday, the US Court of Appeals for the First Circuit said its entire panel will rehear the state's appeal at a hearing scheduled for May 8. Last month, a three-judge panel of the same court upheld a US District Court ruling that Michelle Kosilek, now 64, is entitled to the surgery. Black and Pink is extremely disappointed by this news, but sends love and support to Michelle Kosilek.

BLACK AND PINK SUBMITS TESTIMONY OF BLACK AND PINK BEFORE THE SENATE JUDICIARY SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION, CIVIL RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Black and Pink's testimony to the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee shares some experiences of our family with solitary confinement. By sharing a variety of stories we resist the idea that advocacy for ending solitary confinement should only focus on certain "model" prisoners. We highlight that LGBTQ prisoners are disproportionately placed in solitary confinement, and our submitted testimony advocates for the complete abolishment of solitary confinement in any form and for any circumstance. Here are some excerpts:

"We oppose the use of solitary confinement under any circumstances. Nearly 12% of our members report being held in some form of solitary confinement, which is three times the national average." ... "The days, weeks, months, years, and even decades that prisoners spend in solitary confinement is legalized torture ongoing in prisons across the United States."

We conclude by saying, "The only appropriate action moving forward is to make a short term plan to eliminate the use of solitary confinement. It is our hope that this committee will release recommendations with details on how to effectively shut down all solitary confinement cells. It is an essential step on the road to healing our larger communities for us to end the harm caused by these punitive isolation measures."

ON THE INSIDE ARTWORK FORM

Black & Pink is facilitating the revival of the art program in a new way, called On the Inside! If you are an artist, here's how it will work. Create any artwork that you would like (drawings, cards, paintings). Some of the artwork will be accepted for an upcoming exhibit; the artist will be promptly compensated \$50 for all accepted artwork (except \$10 for cards) and postage expenses incurred. Any artwork that isn't accepted for the exhibit for any reason will be promptly returned to the artist, or other address. If your artwork is accepted for the Exhibition, you assign all right, title and interest in the work to us (in other words you transfer ownership of the art and its copyrights to the Exhibit coordinators) as consideration for participation in the show. The artwork will never be resold, and will likely be donated to an LGBTQ Archive in years to come. **Please do not write your name and number anywhere on the front of the artwork to protect your privacy. We are all excited to see what you create! Please fill out a questions 1 through 6 once, and questions 7 through 10 on separate slip like this for each piece of artwork you submit. Please mail the artwork with the information below on slips to:**

On the Inside, PO Box 173, 2658 Griffith Park Blvd. , Los Angeles, CA 90039

- 1) Your preferred name for the exhibit.
- 2) Your gender pronouns (eg. she / he / xe / they).
- 3) How do you identify? (Optional: gender, sexuality, race, age).
- 4) Your legal name, number, and mailing address.
- 5) If my artwork is not accepted for the exhibit:
 - Send it to my address (please list)
 - Send it to another address (please list)
 - Black & Pink can keep and display it
- 6) Preferred method of compensation:
 - Donation into commissary account (Please include deposit slips or instructions):
 - Magazines/books (Details)
 - Other:
- 7) Title of artwork (for display at exhibit).
- 8) Description of artwork (for display at exhibit).
- 9) Anything else you'd like the exhibit curator to know about the artwork or about yourself which can be shared / feel free to write on another page, and please note that the exhibit curator is not able to be a penpal):

10) I, _____ (Name), give On the Inside permission for my artwork to be exhibited in person, press, catalogues, internet, etc. Sign: _____ Date: _____

BLACK & PINK INCARCERATED FAMILY FEEDBACK!

rip slip here

After reading the notes from the "Free World" retreat, what projects do you think Black and Pink should dedicate the most time to this year? Pick a program (or several) and share with us any concrete suggestions you have or what your dreams for the program would be.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Black & Pink is an open family of LGBTQ prisoners and “free world” allies who support each other. Our work toward the abolition of the prison industrial complex is rooted in the experience of currently and formerly incarcerated people. We are outraged by the specific violence of the prison industrial complex against LGBTQ people, and respond through advocacy, education, direct service, and organizing.

CURRENT PROJECTS

- **A Pen Pal Program** on the internet. LGBTQ prisoners can list their information and a short (non-sexual) ad. People in the free world choose to write to people on the list.
- **A Monthly Newspaper** with stories, poetry, art, and articles by LGBTQ people in prison. The Newspaper also has queer and prison news from the free world.
- **Support** for a small number of people who are experiencing harassment, sexual violence, lack of access to health care, etc.
- **Court Accompaniment Support and advocacy** for court involved people in Eastern Massachusetts (soon to start up with other chapters)
- **Chapters!** Free world allies across the country are growing their own chapters, including Boise, Chicago, San Diego, and others.
- **Collaborative Media project**
- **Hot Pink**, a queer, member-written erotica zine.
- **Religious Support**
- **Know Your Rights**
- **Workshops and Trainings**

ANALYSIS

Our goal is liberation. We have a radical view of the fight for justice: We are feminist. We are anti-racist. We want queer liberation. And we are against capitalism. Prisons are part of the system that oppresses and divides us. By building a movement and taking action against this system of violence, we will create the world we dream of.

We also celebrate the beauty of what exists now: Our love for each other. The strength of our planet. Our incredible resiliency. All of the power we have to continue existing. While dreaming and struggling for a better world, we commit to living in the present.

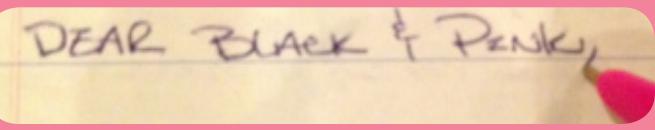
Abolition is our goal, and our strategy for action. Any advocacy, services, organizing, and direct action we take will remove bricks from the system, not put up more walls. We want revolution. And we will work on reforms too, even if they are only small steps at ending the suffering caused by prisons.

Our work is based in the experience of people who are or were in prison. We also raise up the voices of formerly incarcerated people as our “free world” members of the Leadership Circle. We know that those most hurt by the violence of the prison industrial complex have the knowledge of how to tear it down.

Black & Pink’s “free world” membership started in Boston and has spread across the country. We will support one another, share the work of our organizing efforts, and grow our family inside and outside the walls. We would like to increase our national and international membership, creating chapters in more cities, towns, prisons, schools, and neighborhoods.

ADDRESSES: PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESSES FOR MAIL!

Please Note: You can send multiple requests/topics in one envelope! Due to concerns about consent and confidentiality, you cannot sign up other people for the newspaper. However, we can accept requests from multiple people in the same envelope. There's no need to send separate requests in more than one envelope.

	Black & Pink - _____ 614 Columbia Rd Dorchester, MA 02125
Please write one or more of these topics in the top line of the address:	
Newspaper Subscriptions, Pen-Pal Program, Address Change, Request Erotica, Religious Support & Volunteering (Send thank you cards to donors, etc.)	Black & Pink - General
Newspaper Submissions- Stories, Articles, Poems &Art	Black & Pink - Newspaper Submissions
Black & Pink Organization Feedback- Especially the slip on Page 7	Black & Pink - Feedback
Advocacy Requests- Include details about situation and thoughts about how calls or letters might help	Black & Pink - Advocacy
Submit to Erotica Zine	Black & Pink - HOT PINK
Stop Your Newspaper Subscription	Black & Pink – STOP Subscription

Pen Pal Program: LGBTQ prisoners can list their information and short non-sexual ad on the internet where free world people can see it and decide to write. There will be a Pen-Pal Request Form in the Newspaper every 4 months.

Mail: We are several months behind in our mail. There will be a delay before we can open your letter, but keep writing!

LEGAL: Consider writing to Lambda Legal for support or referrals with legal issues that you are having. “Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and those with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work.” Lambda Legal, National Office 120 Wall Street, Suite 1500, New York, NY 10005, 212-809-8585

Assistance with legal research for everyone, and preparing for disciplinary and parole hearings only for people in Massachusetts.

Hotline (9am-5pm EST): 617-495-3127 By mail: Prison Legal Assistance Project, 6 Everett Street, Suite 5107, Harvard Law School, Cambridge, MA 02138

Another resource to turn to, if you can afford the subscription (\$30 yearly, payable with new stamps), is Prison Legal News. This resource was co-started by a former gay prisoner and Men Against Sexism organizer, Ed Mead, though now it is run by Paul Wright. You can reach them by writing to: Prison Legal News, P.O. Box 1151 Lake Worth, FL 33460 (561) 360-2523

SURVIVORS: Just Detention International provides support for prisoners who are survivors of sexual abuse. Write them at the legal address below for a packet. Each packet includes an introductory letter, a list of local resources, fact sheets, publications about recovery from sexual abuse, and a letter of hope from another survivor. Cynthia Totten, Esp Just Detention International, 3325 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 340, Los Angeles, CA 90010

WORDS WE USE

There are many words in our Statement of Purpose and Analysis that mean different things to different people. Here is what they mean to us:

- **Prison Industrial Complex** – The prison industrial complex is a system of control. It is the prisons and jails and detention centers- the concrete and steel buildings that warehouse people. The prison industrial complex is also how the government and companies work together to control, punish, and torture poor communities and communities of color. This includes the police. And immigration enforcement. And courts. And how the news and movies show “criminals.” And cameras in communities. And companies making money on prison phone calls. And how schools are set up to fail us. And many other ways that take power away from many, and keep it with those at the top. (Adapted from Critical Resistance)
- **Abolition** – Abolition means a world where we do not use the prison industrial complex as an ‘answer’ to social, political, and economic problems. Abolition means that instead we make new ways to stop harm from happening. It means responding to harm when it does happen, without simply “punishing.” We will try to fix the causes of harm, instead of using the failed solution of punishment. This means harm will occur far less often. This is often called “harm reduction.” We will not use policing, courts, and prisons, which are making us less safe. Abolition means creating sustainable, healthy communities with the power to create safety. (Based on words by Rose Braz, former director of Critical Resistance)
- “Free World” – We use “free world” for people not in prison, jail, or detention. We use “quotation marks” because we understand the word “freedom” to be complicated. Some people say none of us are free because the arms of the prisons, courts, and police reach into our communities, home, jobs, and schools. Some say freedom is within ourselves and that it can never be taken from us. When we say “free world,” we mean people not in prison, jail, or detention right now.
- **LGBTQ** – These letters stand for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer. We know that sexuality and gender are much bigger than these letters. People also call themselves: same gender loving, homosexual, homophile, transsexual, transvestite, nelly, asexual, Two spirit, intersex, sissy, dyke, and many other labels. We want to find better words for all people who identify outside of heterosexual and strict gender boundaries. For now, we use LGBTQ

BodyImage4Justice is pleased to announce a new campaign to promote discussion of body image and its connection to health and well-being in our community. The Love Ourselves, Love Our Bodies Just As We Are Campaign features our stories in our own words about body image. This campaign focuses on the experiences of transgender people, but includes stories from people throughout the LGBTQ community because we see body image as a common thread that connects people across identities. We invite you to contribute your own thoughts and experiences regarding body image to be included in the campaign, along with a photograph and a brief biographical statement. Contributions can be up to 1000 words long, and may be edited for length and grammar before publishing. Filmmakers and vloggers are welcome to submit short videos (5 minutes or less) and a biographical statement. Please spread the word to others who may be interested in contributing their stories as well—we want to include as many diverse voices as possible in this campaign. To submit, please write to: BodyImage4Justice P.O. Box 120789 Boston MA 02112